

Norfolk and Western Historical Society

P.O. Box 13908 — Roanoke Virginia — 24038-3908



TALK AMONG FRIENDS

April - May - June 2016

Putting Bicycle Tracks on Former N&W Branches

The Norfolk and Western Historical Society is pleased to announce our branch line bicycle tours for 2016. Our first trip in June will be on the North Carolina branch, otherwise known as the New River Trail, from Galax to Foster Falls, Virginia on June 20, 2016. Our second planned trip will be on the Abingdon Branch, also known as the Creeper Trail, from Abingdon to Damascus, Virginia on September 17, 2016. Last year we kicked off this new program with a tour on the Creeper Trail from Whitetop to Damascus, Virginia. We had a great time bicycling while we learned about this picturesque former N&W branch line.

Our ride on the New River Trail will be on June 20, 2016. We will be meeting at Blue Cat on the New, a New River outfitter which is located at 2800 Wysor Highway near Draper, Virginia. To reach Blue Cat on the New turn off of Interstate 81 at Exit 89A/B onto Highway 100 (Wysor Highway) and drive about 5.5 miles to the New River to reach the outfitter. We will leave at 10 am as the outfitter shuttles us to Galax to begin our bike journey along the north flowing New River from Galax to Foster Falls, a journey of about 28 miles over the river grade (level route) that is enjoyed by thousands of people each year. The outfitter will pick us up at Foster Falls and take us back to Blue Cat on the New and our cars.

The North Carolina Branch has an interesting history waiting to be explored and many colorful stories waiting to told. As we travel over the southern segment of the abandoned 57-mile long branch line that ran from Draper to Galax, Virginia, our tour guide will talk about the industry that kept this line busy and the classes of N&W steam locomotives that hauled the trains. If you are modeler this is a great time to get inspired and get some ideas. Biking on abandoned N&W branch lines is a perfect way to meet other people who share your interest in the Norfolk & Western and the roadway it traveled. Our trip is planned to be an easy ride with stops for discussions and photos.

Please make you plans to travel along with us as we rediscover the North Carolina Branch and the others that we plan to bring to you in the future.

Pricing for the June 20th bike trip on the New River Trail

\$25.00 if you bring your own bicycle

\$37.00 if you need a rental bicycle

Sign up for the trip and pay at:

www.nwhs.org/commissary

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NWHS News of Interest

Norfolk Southern's donation of a portion of the old Belt Line to Roanoke Rail group's "Roanoke Southern" for future excursion rides was announced to the public on local TV when Bev Fitzpatrick, Director of the Virginia Museum of Transportation and Jeff Sanders, President of the Roanoke Chapter NRHS, were interviewed. The Roanoke Southern will be formed as an LLC or similar identity as a third party. The idea is to have a weekend of railroading fun which would include visits to O. Winston Link, VMT, N&W Historical Society and Roanoke Chapter NRHS providing operation of a train ride of about 5 miles (round-trip) over the old Belt line along the Roanoke River from Franklin Road to just east of Bridge Street.

Archives Report for December - January - February Work Sessions

We had 16 attendees at the work session in December, 17 in January, and 16 in February. We had a cadre of 16 members who made two or more of the work session at Salem Avenue. This cadre included: Jim Blackstock, Harry Bundy, Ron Davis, Landon Gregory, Gordon Hamilton, Larry Hill, Chris and Harold Hunley, Roger Link, Eddie Mooneyham, Cecil Jones, Skip Salmon, Charlie Schlotthober, Joe Shaw, Dean Taylor.

Six of our members made at least one of the three archive work sessions. These members were Dick Fisher, John Garner, Dick Kimball, Alex Schust, Steve Smith, John Swann.

All NWS members are welcome to attend the Archives work sessions, which are held on the second weekend of each month. Session hours are 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Thursday through Saturday and 12:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Sunday

Specific Research Requests

Archive volunteers handled 18 specific research requests over the November, December, and January time period. We have handled 91 specific requests over the past 12 months. Jim Blackstock, Ron Davis, Roger Link, Joe Shaw and Dave Stephenson worked on research requests.

Database Archives Activities

Considerable data base work was done over the months of December, January and February such that we are well on our way of meeting our 2016 goal of 130,000 data base entries. As on March 12, 2016, we had 121,658 data items entered in our data base. A considerable amount of data base work is done off site. Over the last three months members have accomplished the following:

- (1) Jim Blackstock worked on HS-D series and E series drawings from the Library of Virginia collection, coaling station at Shaffers Crossing (1944), details of various building modifications, GP59 and GP60 painting and stenciling diagrams, HS-C series drawings, engine Terminal buildings in Petersburg, VA, NS T10 locomotive drawings, and Roanoke material yard.
- (2) Fred Boettner worked on caboose slides from Robert G. Bowers collection.
- (3) Harry Bundy worked on HS-CC drawings, proposed freight house in Frankfort In (LE&W), HS-D series drawings, Cincinnati Union Terminal building (1931), and proposed low grade line from Thaxton to Vinton (1952).
- (4) Ron Davis worked on building drawings, new north wing of the Hotel Roanoke plus additions and alterations (1917), highway bridges, shops at Page, WV, HS-D series drawings, various structures, passenger and freight stations for N&W RR (1890), HS-B series, and VGN right-of-way maps and details.
- (5) Cecil Jones worked on HS-C series drawings, GP9, C30-7, GP18 painting and stenciling drawings, layout maps for railroad shops and the office building in Roanoke.
- (6) Dick Kimball worked on slides from the Jim Brewer and Hank Kinzel collections.
- (7) Roger Link worked on maps, freight car details and photos, negatives and photos of N&W structures, Southern Ry E8A electrical equipment drawings, photos from the R. G. Bowers, C. K. Marsh and H.F. Brown collections; G84R, G86R, G90R and G91R gondola rebody program, stenciling drawings for GP7, GP9, GP30, GP35, GP38, GP40 and VGN diesels.
- (8) Skip Salmon worked on Virginian locomotive data from 1916 a-d 1919, axle load and haulage capacity for AB, AD and other 2-8-8-2 classes, MB and MC 2-8-2s, and Tidewater Ry 2-8-0 specifications, VGN Ry Princeton shops, freight car details, locomotive axle load and hauling capacity VGN AB, AE and No. 700.
- (9) Joe Shaw worked on Wabash rolling stock diagrams and index (locomotives, passenger, business and freight cars), stenciling diagram for ex-Wabash B20 box cars, NKP locomotive striping and numbering diagrams, NKP freight car diagrams and index, N&W covered hoppers, maps, track charts and N&W box car details, GP35 styling and painting diagrams, HS-G series drawings, B119A and B121 box car details, Guyandot and Tug River Railroad maps, box car construction details, electrification drawings Vivian to Farm, ballast charts, maps of Mingo Railway Co., U30B schematics, City Point branch right-of-way and track maps, and SD45 electrical diagram.
- (10) John Swann worked on Hollinger boxes, and books in library from GEN.ILL.01 (Illustrated Encyclopedia of North American Locomotives) to GEN.LIM.01 (Lima, The History)

General Archives Activities

Charlie Schlotthober and Larry Hill scanned drawings for orders and continued working on scanning E-size mechanical drawings.

Eddie Mooneyham helped pull, scan and refile drawings from Charlie Schlotthober's collection and added EMD air and electrical drawings from his own collection to the DS series. Eddie also pulled the drawings for the T-42R truck repairs for Roanoke Chapters N&W MS baggage car, which is 611's tool car. The archives provided 46 electronic drawing scans and the bill of materials for the work. Some of these drawings were from the Chapter's collection that was transferred to the archives in 2008. He also looked up VGN EL-3A drawings for an upcoming Chapter project.

Dick Fisher worked on sorting the library books on Thursday and Friday. Books are now sorted up through Southern Pacific. Dick found some books which were on the shelves, but not entered in the database.

Dave Stephenson delivered a carton of accordion files before the December work session. They are to be used to get multiple small donations into one Bankers Box. This will give us a better way to keep the items contained and grouped by accession number prior to processing. Joe Shaw used the new accordion folders to clean up the Donation Table area. Although it still needs more work, it is much improved. Dave moved six full boxes to the back room, and flattened and entered some of the larger drawings. He also brought the Library Arrow collection up to date and entered a 3-copy record set of Volume 31.

Harry Bundy and Landon Gregory continued to trim and steam rolls of drawings having multiple sheets, including many requiring tape. One series of drawings was for the War Department (1942-44) showing the railroads (C&O + N&W) paralleling the Big Sandy River and Tug Fork Kenova to Williamson - 60 consecutive sheets.

Ben Shank continued working on AAR photos and negatives.

Alex Schust was at the Archives and GOB-East in January and February gathering information for an upcoming NWS book on the Buchanan-Levisa-Dismal Creek Branches to be published this summer. Charlie Schlotthober and Roger Link are assisting on the project by scanning large drawings of the branch lines.

Dean Taylor and Mark Seggel rolled Class J posters and inserted them into small-diameter tubes for the Accucraft project. Dean also assisted with flattening drawings.

Joe Shaw taught Cecil Jones to do data entry

Gordon Hamilton continued his research for a future article in "The Arrow" at Salem Avenue and GOB-East.

John Swann went through the donations from VMT and NRHS Roanoke chapter. He pulled all duplicates and books not considered useful for our library. He recorded all items in each box on a donation sheet.

Working from home, John Garner and Dave Stephenson began analyzing the Thieme recordings. Roger Link digitized cassette copies which John and Dave then downloaded. This enabled them to get a start on the recordings without using the original reel-to-reel masters. One unique sequence is an on-train recording of Class M No. 382 on the Abingdon Branch with Nichols' custom made whistle.

GOB East Archives

We had three volunteers at the November GOB East work session: Ron Davis, Rob Ervine and Stephen Warren. Ron Davis performed data entry on all the E-sized drawings in the queue. He did repair work on 11 Hotel Roanoke drawings, sized and entered them. Rob flattened, sized and repaired drawings. He also refiled a number of drawings that had been pulled for scanning. Stephen started processing boxes of material from the 2008 VMT accession. Most of the material is appropriate for storing in Hollinger boxes. Some of the material had evidence of surviving the Flood of 1985. There was correspondence between the N&W and railfans regarding the disposition of early N&W steam locomotives.

Ron Davis, Rob Ervine, Gordon Hamilton, Roger Link and Joe Shaw participated in the December GOB-East work session. Ron did data entry on HS-H and HS-D size drawings. Rob cleaned, flattened, sized and repaired drawings. Gordon worked on a future article for "The Arrow."

Roger did data entry on HS-CC size drawings. Joe cleaned, trimmed and did data entry of various sizes of rolled drawings, many on the Guyandot & Tug River.

Ron Davis, Rob Ervine, Roger Link, Joe Shaw and Stephen Warren participated in the January GOB-East work session. Stephen Warren led the charge on finding boxes of published books in the VMT collection and delivering them to Salem Ave to be merged into the Salem Ave library. Everyone else assisted. Rob, Joe, Roger and Ron also worked on cleaning and flattening drawings.

At the fall board meeting the directors approved the purchase of a second scanner for use at GOB East so that there is no need to carry any materials to Salem Ave. The scanner was purchased and installed at GOB-East in February.

Salem Avenue Archives Drawing of the Month

The drawing of the month for December was HS-D01908, the standard sign used to identify the beginning and end of Automatic Block Signal Territory. It is dated 08/20/1944.

The drawing of the month for January was HS-G00469 - the last of 11 consecutive sheets drawn in 1952 to display a proposed route to by-pass the grades to Blue Ridge. From the east, the line diverted from the current alignment west of Thaxton, crossed U.S. 460 on a deck plate girder bridge, then took a southwest direction loosely paralleling Route 619 to just west of the Union Church area of Bedford, crossing Route 24, then turning north passing northwest of Stewartsville. The line then descended to the Roanoke River, paralleled the Virginian Rwy. to Tinker Creek, where it turned north to reconnect to the present alignment east of Furnace Crossing. Though never built in entirety, drawing HS-G00469 became the layout for the Tinker Creek Connection some seven years later — 1.3 miles of track that joined the N&W to the former Virginian's Roanoke River route for high tonnage coal traffic en route to Tidewater.

December - January - February Visitors

Steve Smith and Fred Boettner visited the Archives in December to continue working on their modeling project. Jim Davis, dispatcher for Norfolk Southern, also stopped by and Charlie Schlotthober showed him around the archives. In January Dr. Burton St. John, Peg McQuire and Jana Bean, Mark Seggel and Steve Warren visited the Archives.

(1) Dr. Burton St. John, a research professor at Old Dominion University, was looking for information regarding the range of promotional and public relations materials used by N&W and Norfolk Southern. He has a book project under contract that examines how some major corporations have used public relations approaches to show that they are contributors to the well-being of society. He also researched corporate newsletters and reviewed some samples of the N&W employee magazine (especially from the 1950s) and other PR materials from that period that was available.

(2) Peg McGuire previewed a portion of the 611 restoration documentary to NWHS and Roanoke Chapter members at the archives Saturday and Sunday, with the goal of getting corrections and feedback. A number of suggestions were provided both days. The Archives supplied 90 photographs and 4 drawings to VMT for the 611 documentary. They also borrowed Louis Newton's 8mm films to digitize them. Louis and NWHS will receive DVDs of the digitized films.

(3) Jana Bean, VDOT, visited the archives Friday to research several bridges in Bedford County that were built by respective railroad companies for county road use to pass over the tracks. These bridges are now in VDOT ownership and VDOT plans to do various maintenance and replacement on these bridges. She was interested in original plans for the bridges and improvements that have been made over the years to them or the surrounding landscape. Jana may return for further research.

(4) Mark Seggel, a volunteer at the C&O archives, was interested in our HS-series process, how we label the drawings and how we store rolled drawings (including the small white cardboard tubes). He was hoping to improve some processes at Clifton Forge. Joe Shaw provided Mark with a demonstration of the mangle press.

(5) Stephen Warren was at the Archives in January to continue working on his Roher mines project.

Stephen Warren continued work on his Roher mines project in February. Kenny Kirkman also visited the Archives in February. Kenny is a FRA locomotive inspector. He lives in West Virginia and Roanoke is in the eastern edge of his territory. Before FRA he was a locomotive engineer on CSX, KCS and others. Kenny filled out an application and is now a member of NWHS.

New Database Search Feature

A new database search feature was added to the Archives database that allows related Archives documents to be "linked". This is useful when searching a number of documents that come in as a set, but for Archiving reasons must be stored under different locator numbers. An example would be a piece of correspondence pinned to a drawing.

There are two different kinds of links that can be made - Parent-Child or Related. With "Parent-Child" relations, one document is the parent or master document. A "Parent" document can have one or more "Child" documents linked to it.

An example of a Parent document linked to a number of children documents can be found at:

<http://www.nwhs.org/archivesdb/detail.php?ID=109159>

The Parent document is a book containing photographs, most from the Radford division. Scans of photos from the book have been placed in the DS series. The photos are linked as child documents to the book.

The other links that can be created are "Related" documents. These are for when a set or collection of documents are equals and no document is more significant than the others. An example of a drawing of the Hotel Roanoke that is part of a set of 5 drawings can be found at:

<http://www.nwhs.org/archivesdb/detail.php?ID=123482>

In this case all of the drawings are equals so they are linked as "Related" documents.

If you go to the Archives "edit" page, you will see a new "Documents" tab added to the search indexes. When you open the Documents tab, you will see two ways to link the current document to other documents. Under the first method you can enter the document ID of the document to be linked, select the relationship, then click "Submit". Under the second method, a number of recently entered documents or documents from the last search will be listed. To the left of the listing are hyperlinks labeled "Part", "Child", or "Related." To link one of these documents with the current document, click on one or more of the hyperlinks. Document links will be displayed with the current search indexes in the middle of the edit screen.

Documents only have to be linked on one end. If you link one document to a second document, you will see the document link if you open the second document. Commonly the Parent document will be entered first. Since the Children documents have not been entered, then no links can be set up until they are. Then as the children documents are entered, they can be linked back to the first document using the Parent link. If you then go back to the Parent document, you will see the links to the Children displayed.

If you have any questions regarding this new feature, please contact Ron Davis, Roger Link or Joe Shaw.

Musing at the Archives

Turning Narrow Gauge Logging Railroads into N&W Branch Lines

Generally when we think about what industry built the Norfolk & Western we think about coal and the role coal had in building and extending the N&W. Occasionally we should pause and think about the role logging, lumber and narrow gauge railroading had in building the N&W. While coal built the main line, lumber companies and narrow gauge railroading contributing to building many of the branch lines. We can generally construct a relatively accurate history of the coal branch lines, but the branch lines based on lumber operations are more elusive because of the short-lived time period of a logging railroad, the lack of records, and the relatively early time period (1890 - 1910) of many of the original logging operations. However examples do exist including the following from West Virginia and Virginia.

One of the most prominent lumberman of the early 20th Century was William McClennan Ritter who came to West Virginia in 1890 and opened a sawmill near Oakvale on the East River and the main line of the N&W. As the N&W extended its railroad to the west, Ritter extended his lumber business to the west, opening his second mill at the mouth of Browns Creek in Welch. By 1899 the W.M. Ritter Lumber Company was headquartered in Welch and was operating lumber mills at Welch, Shannon Branch (Caples), Davy, Panther, Avondale and Beartown in McDowell County. Ritter's narrow gauge logging railroads extended up Browns Creek, Shannon Branch, Davy Branch, the Dry Fork and Panther Creek.

While most logging railroads were nameless and just narrow gauge tramways to haul cut logs from the timbering operations, on January 21, 1898, Ritter and his associates chartered the Jaeger & Southern Railway Company and began a pattern of separating the lumber company and its sawmills from the railroad company. By chartering a common carrier railroad, the W.M. Ritter Lumber Company gained the right to acquire right-of-way for his logging railroad by condemnation proceedings when it could not be acquired by purchase or lease. However as a common carrier the railroad also could be compelled to carry the mail by the Post Office Department and as a common carrier had to carry local freight and passengers at established rates.

The N&W acquired Ritter's Jaeger & Southern Railway Company and South West Virginia Railroad Company in the Pocahontas Coal & Coke land deal of 1901. The Jaeger & Southern Railway Company was the basis of the Dry Fork Branch between Jaeger and the mouth of Jacobs Fork. The South West Virginia Railroad Company formed the basis of the Jacobs Fork Branch.

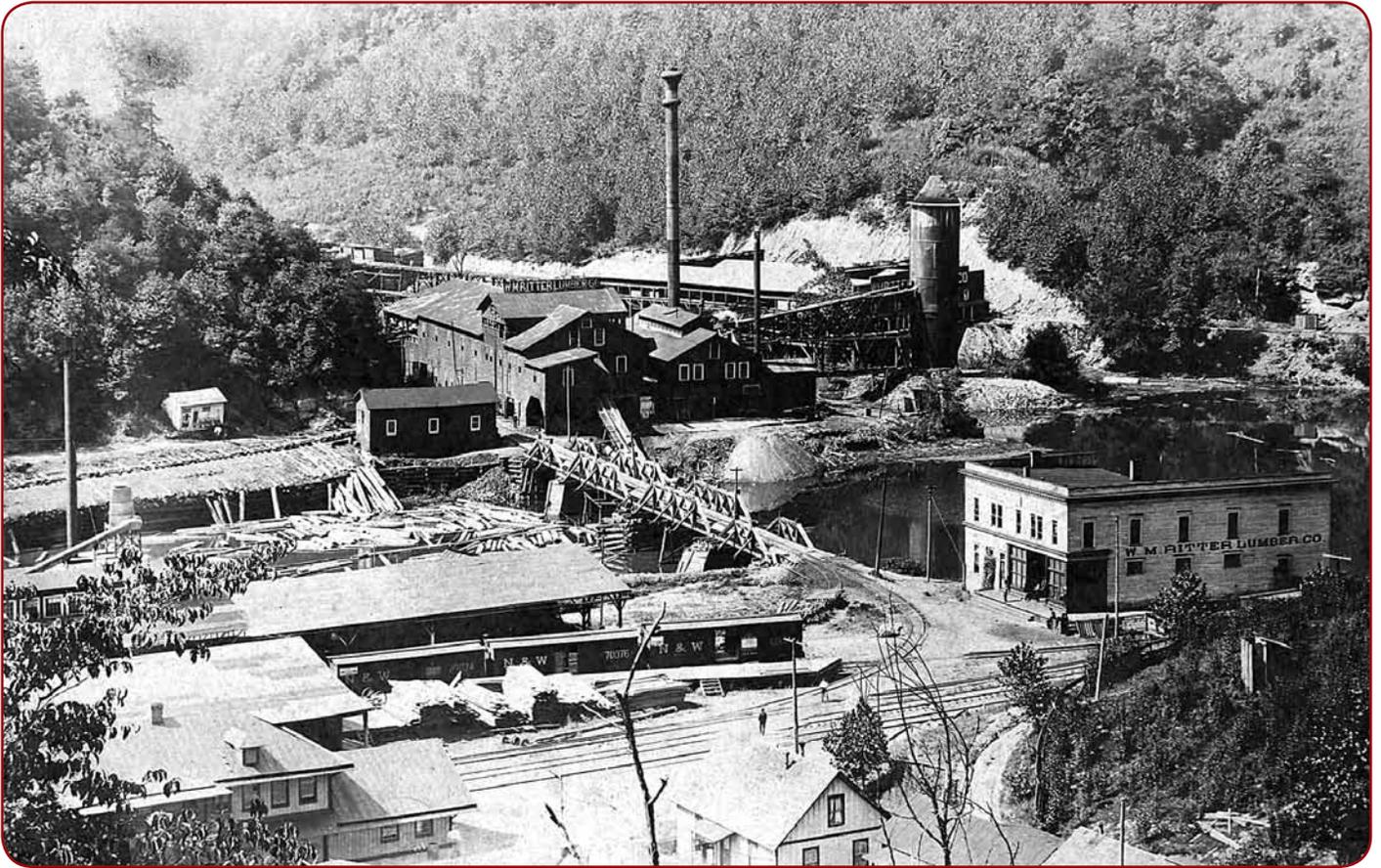
Sudduth & Bailey built a narrow gauge logging railroad up Spice Creek in McDowell County that became the first few miles of the N&W's Spice Creek Branch. C. L. Ritter Lumber Company built a sawmill at Gordon, WV, established the community of Ritter across the Tug Fork from Gordon and operated a narrow gauge logging railroad on the Clear Fork in McDowell County. Ritter's logging railroad formed the basis of George L. Carter's West Virginia Southwestern Railway. The N&W purchased Carter's railroad in 1904 and it became the N&W's Clear Fork Branch.

Other N&W branch lines in McDowell County based on logging railroads were the Four Pole Spur and Kings Branch. A.W. Campbell [Lumber Company] was operating in the area of Longpole Creek and Fourpole Creek about 1898 with a logging railroad. The Longpole Lumber Company built a logging railroad up Fourpole Creek in 1900. The Crosby & Beckley Lumber Company had a logging railroad on Laurel Creek at Kimball for a number of years (Kings Branch).

The W.M. Ritter Lumber Company moved into Pike County, Kentucky and Buchanan County, Virginia in 1899 when the Knox Creek Lumber Company and West Virginia & Kentucky Railroad (WV&K RR) were chartered. In January 1900 W.M. Ritter chartered the Big Sandy & Cumberland (BS&C) Railroad in Virginia. The BS&C purchased the rolling stock of the WV&K RR, but the W.M. Ritter Lumber Company kept control of the WV&K right-of-way and built railroad. The W.M. Ritter Lumber Company used the BS&C to acquire the right-of-way from the Kentucky-Virginia state line to Hurley and then to Blackey in 1905, Stacy (Matney) in 1910 and up Slate Creek toward the West Virginia state line in 1911.

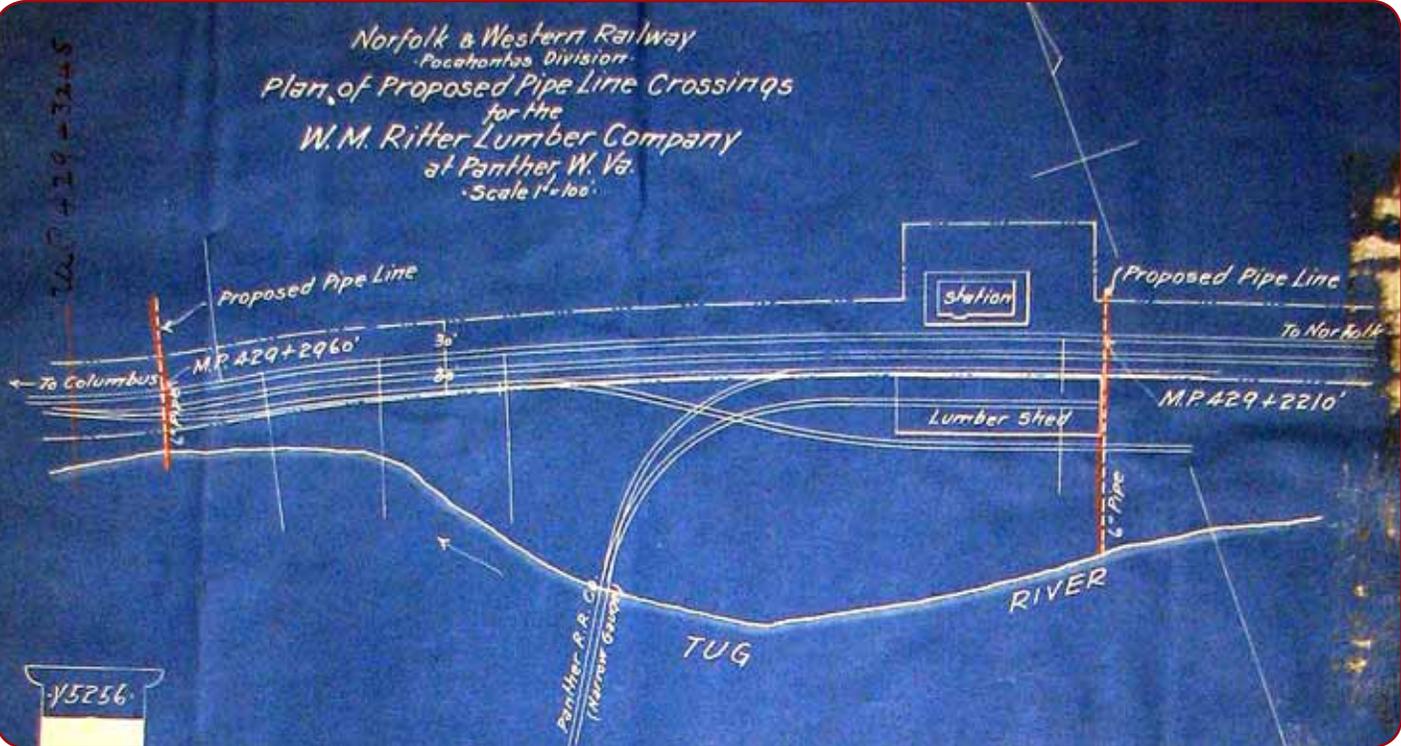
In 1916 the BS&C was extended to Grundy. While the BS&C was responsible for acquiring the right-of-way, the BS&C contracted with the W.M. Ritter Lumber to build the railroad. Once constructed the lumber company would lease the





The photograph shows the W.M. Ritter Lumber Company sawmill on Panther Creek at Panther, WV circa 1900. The narrow gauge logging railroad of the Panther Railroad Company crossed the Tug Fork to the lumber sheds located next to the N&W main line. The N&W Panther depot is shown in the lower left corner of the photo. *Eastern Regional Coal Archives collection*

N&W Drawing Y-5256, dated October 4, 1904, shows the general layout at Panther. The layout is similar to most lumber companies where the narrow gauge logging railroad delivered the lumber from the sawmill to a covered transfer platform where it was loaded into standard gauge cars. *NWHS Archives*



W.M.RITTER LUMBER COMPANY,

MANUFACTURERS OF

HARDWOODS AND WHITE PINE.

GENERAL OFFICES, COLUMBUS, OHIO.

POPLAR
PLAIN AND QUARTERED OAK
AND WHITE PINE
OUR SPECIALTIES.

CABLE ADDRESS
"RITTER" A.B.C. CODE.
LONG DISTANCE TELEPHONE
2205.

Columbus, Ohio.

Dec. 2, 1901.

Pulaski Iron Co.,

Eckman, W. Va.

Gentlemen:-

Referring to yours of the 28th. We assure you we are doing everything in our power to move out the large number of orders that have become blockaded. The shortage of cars is what has put us behind and we were today in receipt of a letter from our superintendent at Panther, stating that he had twelve cars piled up on the docks and no empties to load, and that they were forced to stop sawing as they had not the room to pile the material. As you are, no doubt, aware, we saw daily about 200,000 feet of lumber, but it is not the amount of it that holds us--it is the impossibility to get equipment to load. When we took the orders, we thought we could see our way clear to handle them as you wanted them, and we assure you that we would rather not have the orders than to have you think we have been other than business-like, which no doubt, you are forced to feel. The railroad companies have practically thrown up their hands and say they cannot furnish us all the equipment necessary to move our output. We will send a man to the mill tomorrow to urge out your shipments and give you some information regarding the lumber.

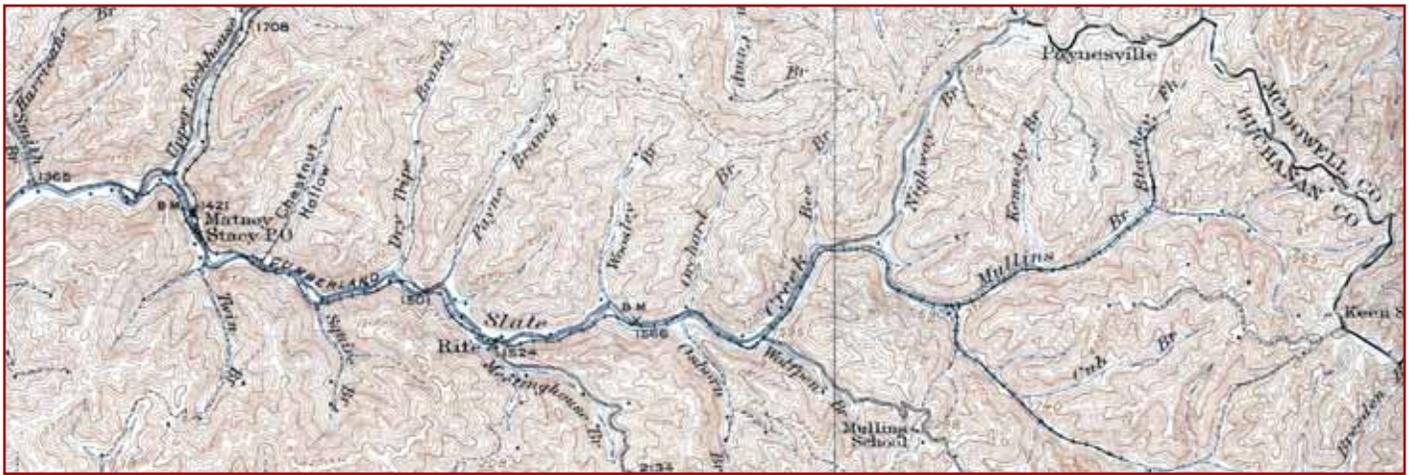
Yours truly,

W. M. RITTER LUMBER CO.

BY

J. W. Taylor
Sales Manager.

D/T



This segment of a 1917 USGS topographic map used 1914-1915 survey data to show the BS&C coming down Upper Rockhouse Creek to Matney and then on to Rife. While the BS&C did not continue east from Rife up Slate Creek, the W.M. Ritter Lumber Company's logging railroad did. The logging railroad is shown east of Rife along Slate Creek with a spur up Mullins Branch toward the West Virginia state line.

railroad to the BS&C for operation. The N&W acquired the BS&C in 1923 and the logging railroads along the Levisa Fork constructed by the W.M. Ritter Lumber Company. The BS&C and W.M. Ritter Lumber Company logging railroad became the basis of the N&W's Buchanan, Levisa and Dismal Creek branch lines.

Part of the Dismal Creek Branch was probably built on the C.L. Ritter Lumber Company's logging railroad that ran west from Whitewood on Dismal Creek. The C.L. Ritter Lumber Company with offices in Graham, VA and Huntington, WV purchased the holdings of the Yellow Poplar Lumber Company in Buchanan County in January 1910. The Yellow Poplar Lumber Company had built a narrow gauge logging railroad from its connection with the N&W at Doran on the Clinch Valley District to Whitewood on Dismal Creek. The narrow gauge railroad ran up the Left Fork of Mudlick Creek, over the mountain to Hurricane Creek and then up Laurel Creek to its junction with Dismal Creek. The plan was to build west from Whitewood along Dismal Creek for about 17 miles. A 1916 USGS topography map with 1914-1915 survey data shows the lumber railroad was built west from Whitewood along Dismal Creek to Burnt Chestnut Creek and north from Dismal Creek along Linncamp Creek.

By March 1910 the C.L. Ritter Lumber Company was replacing the 54 miles of wooden rail the Yellow Poplar Company had put down with steel rail, and by October 1910 the C.L. Ritter Lumber Company was cutting 1,000,000 feet of lumber per month. The 1916 Clinch Valley District resurvey shows there were multiple lumber transfer sheds at Doran served by the N&W and the narrow gauge logging railroad.

One other logging railroad that partially became a N&W branch line was 6.6 miles of the Russell Fork Transportation Company chartered by the Honaker Lumber Company operating at Putnam, VA on the Clinch Valley District. The N&W bought 6.6 miles of the Russell Fork Transportation Company logging railroad between Putnam and Drill, VA for its Lewis Creek Branch. (See *Clinch Valley ~ Norfolk & Western District Line* available from NWHS Commissary). The Russell Fork Transportation Company ran north from Putnam along Lewis Creek before crossing a mountain in a series of switchbacks before reaching the Right Fork of Garden Creek. The logging railroad followed the Right Fork of Garden Creek to Garden Creek and continued north along Garden Creek to its confluence with the Levisa Fork. The logging railroad then turned east along the Levisa Fork for a short distance. The short distance of the logging railroad along the Levisa Fork probably formed the right-of-way for the N&W Hanger Spur when the N&W's Buchanan Branch Extension reached Garden Creek in 1935.

(Note: You can read more about the W.M. Ritter Lumber Company, Big Sandy & Cumberland Railroad and the Buchanan Branch, Levisa Branch and Dismal Creek Branch the NWHS publishes "Buchanan/Levisa/Dismal Creek ~ Norfolk & Western Branch Lines" in the summer of 2016.)

The magazine article *The "Log" of a Tree* from the October 1928 *Norfolk and Western Magazine* provides a good description of how a lumber company and its logging railroad was operated.

E. H. SUDDUTH
E. L. BAILEY

☒ Telephone Connection
Throughout the Coal Field

MILLS { Welch, W. Va.
Roderfield, W. Va.
Hansley, W. Va.

PLEASE SEND DUPLICATE INVOICE

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☒ MANUFACTURERS OF ☒

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ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO
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10/31/1901.

The "Log" Of A Tree

A Story About The Evolution Of Giants Of The Forest Into Finished Lumber Products

By MR. RAY L. RHODE

TWO MEN were standing beside a machine—one at either end. One man was feeding the machine by guiding long, slim pieces of lumber into its mouth. At the other end a man was guiding the same pieces of lumber to an endless conveyor belt. But the lumber coming from the machine had been altered in appearance. It had been cut, grooved, planed and bevelled. In the twinkling of an eye a piece of lumber, 16 feet long, had been changed from an ordinary piece of rough wood to a finished piece of flooring. The machine had performed nearly a half-dozen operations at once—the final manufacturing processes applied to a rough bit of timber from the woods of the W. M. Ritter Lumber Company, near Grundy, Va.

But, before going further, I want to pay a little tribute to Mrs. Ray L. Rhode. In the August number, you'll remember, she became an author. She said something about my opportunities for satisfying my curiosity and—oh, well, do you know of a woman whose curiosity was *ever* satisfied? And maybe I *can't* whistle the Doxology. There are some things I can do. For instance, it is evident the boss didn't want any "lumberjills" to go after the story I'm going to tell here. Besides, people who go "lumbering" must climb mountains, do plenty of walking and perform other exercises not exactly suited to corpulent women. (If the boss lets that last crack stay in the story I'm leaving for a vacation trip the day the MAGAZINE comes out!) Now, to get down to the story:

In appearance, there is nothing unusual about a piece of hardwood flooring. But from the time it is merely a tree until it emerges as a smooth, sleek board, it has a long, interesting journey. So interesting, in fact, that I am going to attempt to describe this journey.

Arriving at Devon, about 23 miles east of Williamson, in company with my old stand-by, Photographer Bryan Beard, we were met at the station there by a representative of the Ritter Company—H. E. Everley, editor of *The Hardwood Bark*, a publication somewhat similar to our MAGAZINE and published for the employees of the W. M. Ritter Lumber Company and subsidiary companies. And he proved to be a most interesting guide.

Branching off, nearly due south, from the Norfolk and Western main line at Devon, there is a narrow-gauge railroad penetrating the virgin hardwood forests of the Appalachian Highlands in triangular Buchanan County, Virginia. The road winds around the mountains until it climbs to an elevation of 1,916 feet at a point about 24 miles from Devon. Then it descends for nearly 10 miles until it reaches its lowest level at the end



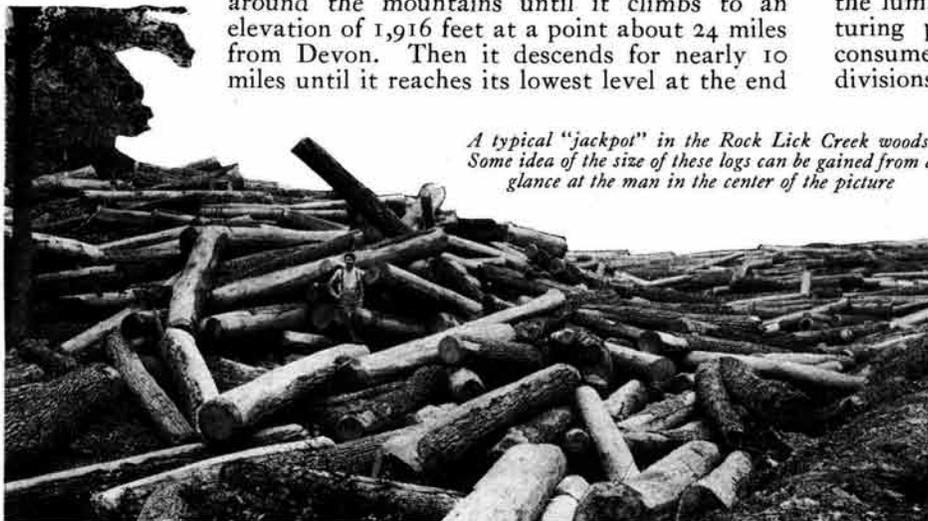
Felling a giant oak

of the line at Grundy, Va. It is called the Big Sandy and Cumberland Railroad, and is the main artery of transportation from the forests to our line. So it was a B. S. & C. mixed train which we boarded at Devon to start an eventful ride to Grundy.

At Lower Elk, Ky., we got our first glimpse of a Ritter Company mill. It was the planing and finishing mill, where the lumber undergoes its last manufacturing processes before going to the consumer. There are three principal divisions of products manufactured by

this company: Rough, sawed lumber, and what is called "dimension stock," which includes the smaller cuttings of lumber used for the making of all kinds of furniture, in-laid floor designs (parquetry), boxes, etc., and flooring. Of course, there are many varieties of woods produced from the Ritter operations, including red and white oak, poplar, chestnut, ash, basswood, beech, hickory, maple and walnut.

At Lower Elk, also, I received my first insight into



A typical "jackpot" in the Rock Lick Creek woods. Some idea of the size of these logs can be gained from a glance at the man in the center of the picture



Workmen freeing the logs with peavies preparatory to "ballhooting" them down the mountainside

large scale lumber production. Mr. Everley tells me that the Ritter Company is the largest hardwood lumber producing concern in the United States, manufacturing approximately 130,000,000 feet of lumber every year, of which 20,000,000 feet is finished flooring. To the Norfolk and Western, alone, the company yearly delivers about 25,000,000 feet of rough and finished lumber. Its plants and forest lands are located not only along the line of the Big Sandy & Cumberland Railroad, in Kentucky and Virginia, but also on other lines in Virginia, North Carolina, West Virginia and Tennessee.

There are about 2,500 employees connected with the Ritter Company's many operations, exclusive of its large coal operations in West Virginia. Like the men and women who make up the Norfolk and Western Family these lumber producers are united by a spirit very similar to that which exists on the railroad. It is only necessary to visit, as I did, one of the Ritter operations to note that. After all, there is much truth in the statement that "A corporation may spread itself over the whole world and it may employ a hundred thousand men, but the average person will usually form his judgment of it through his contact with one individual." It is needless to say that, although I came in contact with more than *one individual* of the Ritter organization, the judgment I formed of it was the same for each one. Their employees are good-will advertisements for their company.

But to go back to our story. We were on our way to the forests. To hasten our journey we transferred at Hurley, Va., the location of one of the saw mills, to an automobile driven by H. B. Price, the Ritter Company's supplyman at Hurley. Here we also met Dr. A. S. Richardson, head surgeon and chief of staff of the hospital at Hurley. This hospital serves not only the employees of the lumber company, but the entire community of Hurley and the surrounding country.

Arriving at Grundy, 20 miles away, I made my first acquaintance with a real Ritter lumberman—C. W. McCoy, superintendent of the B. S. & C. Railroad, and also superintendent of the Ritter woods operations in and around Grundy. Mr. McCoy is an "old timer" in the lumber game, entering the service of W. M. Ritter in 1899, when the operations along Knox Creek and the B. S. & C. were first purchased. He was to be another guide and companion for us on our trip to the forests—and we could not have found a better one.

There is an extension of the Big Sandy & Cumberland from Grundy, 12 miles west along the Levisa River, which directly taps the virgin forests from which come

the total daily supply of nearly 70,000 feet of lumber to the two saw mills at Blackey and Hurley and the planing and finishing mill at Lower Elk.

In the afternoon, we arrived at the lumber camp, which is the center of all the woods operations. It is called the "Harper's Branch" camp, and is situated in a little valley along the banks of Rock Lick Creek, a tributary of the Levisa.

Both the mills and the lumber camps owe their locations to the source of lumber supply, but the location of the camp is not as permanent as that of the mills. It must be near the forests and when they dwindle the camp is moved closer to a new timber supply. Because of this never-permanent location, the houses and camp cars in which the workmen and timber cutters live are built so they can be moved from place to place.

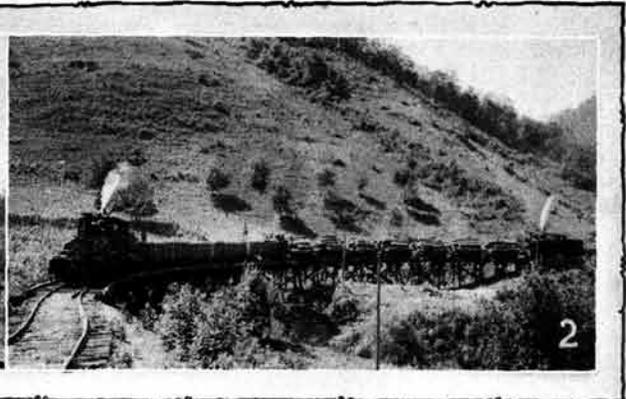
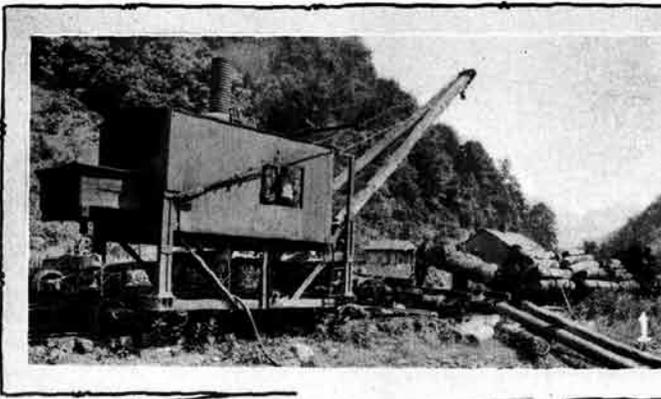
But there was still a journey before us. Mr. McCoy told us that the source of the timber supply was about three miles further, into the heart of the mountains. So, taking the road, we paralleled the railroad until we came to the point where the railroad stopped. And then we walked on and up under depths of shade. As we journeyed we noticed that the trees were larger in circumference and taller. Nearly at the top of one mountain we came upon a cutting crew which was just preparing to fell one of the giant monarchs.

Now there is an art in properly "felling" a tree. Three men are required to do the job. First, two of the timber cutters made a "saw-in" into the trunk of the tree, about a foot from the bottom, with a cross-cut saw. Then one of the experts, with a double-edged axe, made a sort of a semi-circular lead notch, enlarging the saw-in. Strange to say, the tree will fall in a line, exactly perpendicular to the straight line of the lead notch. In this way a tree may be compelled to fall in any direction even though it grows on the side of a hill. Around on the other side, directly opposite and parallel to the straight line of the lead notch, the other two men make another saw-in with their cross-cut saw until they strike the notch. Then, of course, the tree falls.

It was an inspiring sight to watch the fall of the big oak. We were standing a 100 feet away, watching closely. There was a motion, barely perceptible, in the branches, at the top of the tree. I could see that the "tip-top" was moving slightly. Now a little more. Then gradually the tall figure, standing out from the foliage behind it, seemed to move from its vertical position like the spoke of a giant wheel. The speed of its fall increased—faster now, and faster yet—until the majestic tree crashed down into the bushes and under-

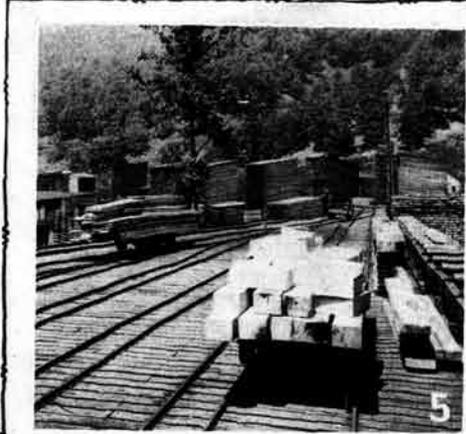
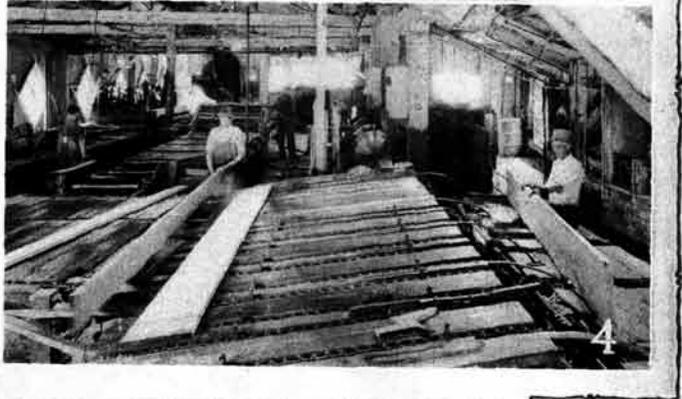


"Skidding" the logs with horses



(1) The steam loader at work loading the log cars. (2) A log train pulling a heavy grade near "Rock House Gap," on its way to Blackey. (3) One of the Ritter sawmills, showing the log pond and the "jack slip" which carries the logs from the pond to the mill. (4) Interior of the sawmill at Hurley. Here the boards are shown just after the sawing process, being inspected and graded. The grader is shown at the extreme right examining a board

(5) Transporting lumber from the sawmill to the stacks at Hurley. (6) Unstacking the lumber and loading it onto flat cars for shipment. (7) Planing the boards. (8) Inside of the flooring plant. A side and end matching machine. A piece of finished flooring is shown emerging from the discharge end of the machine



brush with a roar that reverberated through the whole wood. An oak had met its doom.

The next process, Mr. McCoy explained, would be removing the branches and sawing the tree into logs. This, he said, was a very important operation, because it determines to a considerable extent the grade of the lumber. The most desirable length of finished lumber is 16 feet, with a minimum of defects in the board. The timber cutter has the two-fold problem of sawing the tree into the longest perfect logs, and assembling all the knots and other defects in the tree trunk at one point, as far as possible. If it's impossible for the tree to be sawed into logs 16 feet long, then it is sawed into lengths of 12, 10 and 8 feet, and as many 16-foot lengths as are obtainable.

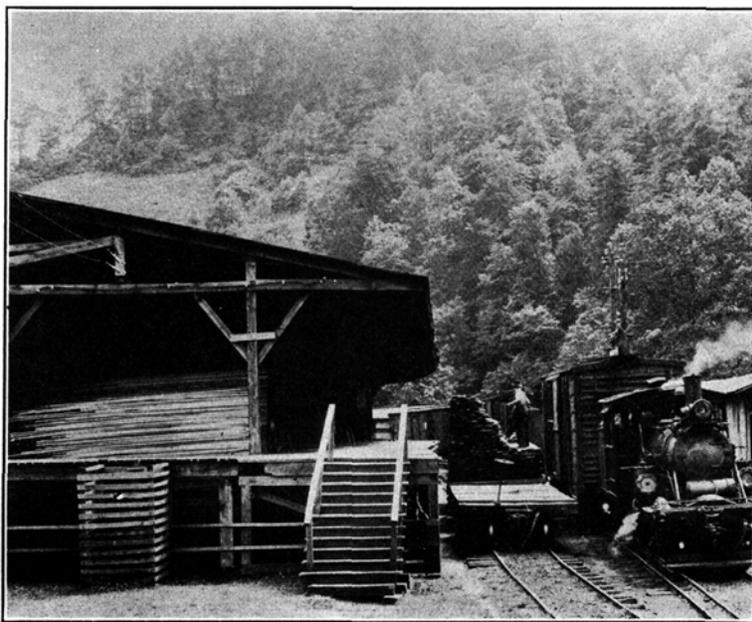
Immediately after the logs are sawed the transportation problem begins. The cars are some distance away. From the mountain side where the trees were felled, the logs are "ballhotted" (allowed to slide down the mountain side of their own momentum) to lower levels. The bark is removed from one side of the log so that the sliding will be facilitated. Then with the aid of "peavies" or cant hooks, the log is freed from others surrounding it and allowed to slide. We observed one log being "ballhotted," and before it had reached the valley below, it had gathered enough speed and momentum to brush aside all obstructions in its path.

But after the logs have been "ballhotted" to comparatively level ground, they are not much nearer the cars. Another mode of transport, the horse, enters the scene. Approximately a dozen teams of horses are used by Mr. McCoy's men to drag the logs from their "ballhotted" resting place to the "jackpot," an assembling place for loading the logs onto the cars. Dragging the logs with horses is called "skidding," because the logs are tied with chains and made to slide over the ground. The "jackpots" are depressions in the ground, adjacent to the railroad, in which the logs are allowed to pile up, presenting much the appearance of a mass of huge "jackstraws," hence the term "jackpot."

On our way back to the lumber camp, we saw how the logs are loaded from the jackpot to the log cars. They are not loaded by hand, but by a machine, which operates quite remarkably. It is called a steam loader and consists of a swivel crane, the power and control mechanism of which is located above an open underframe through which are laid tracks. On these tracks the flat log cars pass up under the upper part of the crane, and down again to the ground tracks there to be loaded with logs. In reality it looks as if the cars

are passing through the crane. As the cars are loaded the "shay" locomotive pulls ahead a car's length so that another empty will take its place under the jib.

When a trainload of logs has been assembled they are pulled to the camp where a main line crew takes them on to "Bee Hive Siding." Here, the next morning, two locomotives from the mills at Blackey and Hurley, exchange a trainload of empties, which they have brought with them, for the loaded cars. The empties are then brought to the woods to be loaded during the day. Approximately 34 cars of logs are transported from the Rock Lick operations to the mills every day, Mr. McCoy said. It's necessary for these woodsmen to stay eternally on the job. Every day it takes about 500 logs to keep the mills at Hurley and Blackey supplied with raw material. And this is no little job.



At Lower Elk. Transferring the rough lumber from the narrow gauge flat cars to the standard gauge Norfolk and Western equipment

On the return trip from the lumber camp we travelled via motor car and were given the opportunity to observe the *real* job of railroading with which the Ritter Company was confronted when it decided to tap the forest resources along and south of Knox Creek. From the camp to Grundy the land was relatively level, but after we had passed the lumber metropolis, the railroad began to climb. It was not long before the line began to cut through high cliffs in an effort to make the ascent of the Appalachian Moun-

tains as easy as possible. At several points it was necessary to build high and expensive trestles over creeks and depressions. And where the line actually crossed the top of the mountain was an example of first class railroad construction work.

Down the other side of the mountain we went a-flying, with our motor car clinging to the rails and taking curves confidently. We made Blackey at noon. Here was my opportunity to get some first-hand knowledge on the next step in lumber manufacture.

My first impression was one of huge stacks of lumber, standing in relief against the mountains. The sun was bright and hot and the lumber glistened. My guides explained that this was one method of drying lumber, and that it was allowed to remain in these stacks for about four to eight months, depending on weather conditions. Approximately 5,000,000 feet of lumber was stored here going through the drying process. There is quite an art in stacking the lumber, too—but I am getting ahead of my story. Let's go to the saw mill.

After tramping up a flight of stairs into the door of the mill, my entrance was greeted with a tumultuous noise of machinery. Dashing back and forth before

(Turn to page 845)

The "Log" Of A Tree

(Continued from page 782)

me was a giant platform, mounted with a mass of control levers and mechanism. Underneath were wheels, and the whole machine moved back and forth on rails laid on the floor. On the back side was a right-angle support or "knee" which held a log in place. On the platform stood two men, controlling its operation. With it they dashed back and forth, never seeming to lose their equilibrium, however. This machine was the band saw carriage, which introduces the rough logs to the band saw for sawing into boards. The band saw, itself, was installed in a great, box-looking arrangement with flying wheels and gears. As the carriage moved along its track the band saw ate its way lengthwise of the log, slicing off a slim board as nicely as you please. The carriage carried the newly-sawed board to a receiving conveyor, which took it away to the inspectors.

BESIDES the place where the carriage stopped to receive the rough log is what is called the "log deck." It is built on an incline so the logs will roll down onto the carriage. But where do the logs come from? Turning around and looking out of one of the doors I saw a pond filled with floating logs. And then I noticed that there was an inclined conveyor arrangement from the pond to the second floor of the mill, which brought the logs to the "log deck." The log pond is a feature of all the large hardwood plants in the Appalachians. It not only serves as the concentration place for the logs at the mills, but also makes it possible for them to be sorted and cleaned.

But to go back to the newly-sawed boards on their way to the inspector. After the perfect boards had been sorted from the imperfect ones, slow-moving cleated chains carried them to the man who, like the sawyer, really "knows his stuff," when it comes to marking up lumber. He is called the "grader." He gives each board one careful squint, turning it on all sides as he looks, and his pencil does the rest. He marked on the boards its exact grade in hieroglyphics that, of course, were incomprehensible to me, but which, I was told, meant the same thing as 1's and 2's, No. 1 Common, No. 2 Common, etc. As the grader marked them the boards moved along to another man (the "tally man") who measured them with his stick, then set down on the tally sheet before him the number of feet in each board under the proper grade listing.

Of course not every board sawed is perfect. Often they are sawed into shorter lengths in another department of the mill, called the by-product mill. The principal by-product of lumber is called "dimension stock," which is used in the manufacture of furniture, kitchen cabinets, clocks, bookcases, washboards, handles, etc. It consists of the shorter lengths of wood; blocks and narrow strips. It is never manufactured in sizes thicker than one inch, wider than six inches, and longer than 48 inches. After this dimension material has been resawed, ripped, edged, and trimmed, it arrives at a table where it is graded, sorted and tallied. It is then piled with the greatest care in sheds for air drying. And now we followed both the ordinary boards, which we left in the hands of the grader, a moment ago, and the dimension stock, to the yards where it is stacked for drying.

From the grader the boards go to the sorters, who

load all lumber of one grade on narrow gauge trucks to be pushed to the yard. As there are about 150 different grades of lumber, I found that the sorters have quite an important and exacting job.

The rails run right into the midst of the lumber stacks. The object of stacking the lumber is to compel it to dry in the shortest possible time, consequently, what are called "stickers" are placed in between each layer of boards to avoid one board lying upon another and to facilitate the drying process.

As far as unfinished lumber is concerned, that was the end of its journey along the road of manufacturing. When dried the boards are ready to be loaded into flat cars for shipment to Lower Elk, where they are transferred to standard gauge box car equipment from our line.

But we wanted to pay a visit to the finishing plant at Lower Elk. So, in company with J. W. Damron, planing mill superintendent, whom we picked up on our motor car at Hurley, we "high-balled" again, and arrived at the finishing plant just in time to see the Devon shifter spot several freight cars on the plant siding for loading.

You'll remember that the rough lumber has already remained in the drying yards for several months and is now thoroughly dry. Rough lumber selected for the manufacture of flooring comes direct from the yard to the finishing plant, but before it goes through any of the planing processes it is kiln-dried. At the Lower Elk plant there were five kilns with a total capacity of 300,000 feet of lumber. The rough lumber is left in these kilns from 12 to 15 days so that all the moisture can be absorbed. From the kilns the boards go to a cooling shed where they remain for 72 hours before going to the planing mill.

In one of the pictures near by a man is shown feeding two rough boards into the planer. This is one of the first steps in the manufacture of flooring proper. After these boards are planed they are cut into the desired widths. And it is here that we return to that remarkable machine, and the two men I was talking about in the opening paragraph of this story. They were operating what is called a side and end matching machine, designed to cut, groove, tongue and plane the board, which, by this time, has been sawed into the desired width. To insure the perfection of each piece of flooring a mechanic stands at the discharge end of this machine to test each piece with a steel gauge as it comes to him. If the slightest variation of width, thickness or match is found, the machine is immediately stopped and properly adjusted.

After the flooring is side and end-matched, it travels on a belt conveyor to another "grader" who marks it for grade. It is then sorted for length and passes on to the head grader, who checks the work of the first inspector, and, in addition, sorts the upper grades for color, thus insuring, as far as possible, constant uniformity.

WE then saw men bundle the finished flooring and transport it to another part of the mill. We followed them and found that they were storing it in another drying room. Here Mr. Damron tells us 1,000,000 feet of lumber are stored. The temperature is always 85 degrees in this room and the humidity must be maintained at a constant level so that the flooring may be kept from absorbing moisture and remain in proper condition until time for shipment. From the drying room the flooring is loaded into box cars.

These, too, are brought over the B. S. & C. from Devon by the shifter which "shuttles" back and forth between Devon and Lower Elk. Although the track is narrow gauge, an additional rail is laid between these two points so that standard gauge equipment can be transported over it. Before the finished hardwood flooring is loaded into these cars, however, they are sealed with paper, and every precaution is taken to protect the flooring in transit.

So that's the story of a piece of hardwood flooring. In appearance there's nothing extraordinary-looking about it, but—well, many men have worked upon it, and considerable time and expense has been devoted to making it what it is. Not only that, but I think I have my curiosity *sure-enough* satisfied this time. But Mrs. Rhode hasn't. She's already planned another trip. However, I fear the ice-box and the cat will miss her too much.



Improvements At Winston-Salem

(Continued from page 786)

a train of 65 cars completely around. The loop encircles an area of 820 feet in diameter and contains 2,700 feet of new track. The advantage of the loop over the wye track arrangement, used at other points on the system, lies in the elimination of switchback movement. It is planned to move the roundhouse from its present location in the old yard to the center of the loop track circle at some future date. The laying of the loop track was necessary for the reversing of passenger cars, and for an additional means of turning locomotives.

The new yard and the modern facilities installed in it are not the only new additions to the Winston-Salem Terminal. A second track, about two and one-half miles long, was laid. It extends from the southern limit of the new yard to what is popularly known as the "Tower." It is located near the interlocking point at the south end of the old yard. Here there is a junction point with the Southern Railway. The new track was needed almost as badly as the new yard. For some time the right of way through the city had been congested because of numerous sidings serving industrial plants. Branching off of the Norfolk and Western right of way in and about Winston-Salem are 142 private sidings and delivery tracks. The industrial switching territory embraces 11 miles of track. Within this territory, in addition to the private sidings, there are 15 public team tracks, conveniently located and with an aggregate capacity of 80 cars. Possibly this will indicate the large scale of industrial activity now going on in North Carolina's largest city.

The heart of Winston-Salem is now pierced with a continuous stretch of double track. In addition to the new track laid between the old and new yard, the section between the old yard and Fries Yard was already double-tracked. In all, then, there is approximately five miles of double track through the city.

Fries Yard has been abandoned by our railway as far as the classification and making up of trains is concerned. Before the coming of the new yard, Fries Yard helped to solve the problem of congestion in the

old yard. All of the Winston-Salem Southbound trains were made up and classified here. Under the new arrangement, however, the Southbound freights are now classified and made up in the new yard. An extensive interchange business with the Southern Railway and the Winston-Salem Southbound is carried on. All of this is in addition to the handling of Norfolk and Western trains.

It is now possible to handle, under normal conditions, 1,000 cars in and out of the new yard at North Winston every day. In fact, between 600 and 700 cars are being handled at the present time. Approximately one-third of these cars are consigned to and originate from Winston-Salem proper. Seven yard crews, totaling 38 men, are required during a 24-hour period to operate this terminal. Interchange with the Winston-Salem Southbound totals 180 cars a day, while 130 cars are exchanged with the Southern.

In the switching of trains, it is necessary for the yard employees to "keep on their toes," for there are 15 different classifications. Cars for Winston-Salem Southbound trains are switched into as many as 10 different classifications before leaving the yard. In addition, cars consigned for local delivery to consignees in Winston-Salem may be classified into as many as four divisions. As for the cars to be interchanged with the Southern, all of these are shifted into a single cut and delivered to this road without further classification. For northbound movement over our line there are four more classifications necessary.

The city of Winston-Salem itself is benefiting considerably by the construction of the new yard and the laying of the double track. At the north end of the yard three grade crossings were eliminated with the construction of two reinforced concrete bridges—one for the use of the State highway, and one for the county—and by the construction of another railway bridge. Also, through the north end of the yard two streets have been opened, one Glenn Avenue and the other an entrance for the county road. The opening of these streets will give quicker access to and from the city and will greatly expedite traffic. Because of the building of the second track through the city it was necessary to construct five overhead bridges for the use of the railway and to widen some of the spans of the street overhead bridges already in use. Where Liberty Street crosses the main line, near the freight station, it was necessary to tear out the old bridge at that point and build a new one of reinforced concrete. Work is now in progress on this bridge, and it is expected to be in use by November 1.



Picnic at Christiansburg

(Continued from page 794)

243 pounds. Prettiest girl on the grounds, winner: Minnie Ford, Washington, D. C. Oldest lady on the grounds, winner: Mrs. Rosebelle Clinton, Keystone, W. Va. Young men's race, winner, Jack Farmer, Pocahontas. Boy's race, winner: Frank Johnson, Christiansburg. The prize for the prettiest family of children was awarded to Mrs. Lillian Trigg, Bluefield.

Places Along the N&W in the 21st Century



Ed Painter photographed NS 1065 leading No. U60 on Buchanan Branch, between Weller Yard and Grundy, on January 29, 2016.



N&WHS 2016 CONVENTION

THURSDAY, MAY 19, THROUGH SUNDAY, MAY 22

CONVENTION ACTIVITIES WILL BE HELD AT
HILTON GARDEN INN

CONVENTION HOTEL ROOM RESERVATION INFORMATION

HEADQUARTERS HOTEL

Hilton Garden Inn Pikeville

849 Hambley Boulevard

Pikeville, KY 41501

<http://tinyurl.com/2016-nwhs>

Room rate of \$119.00 through April 22

Book your room early to obtain this special rate.

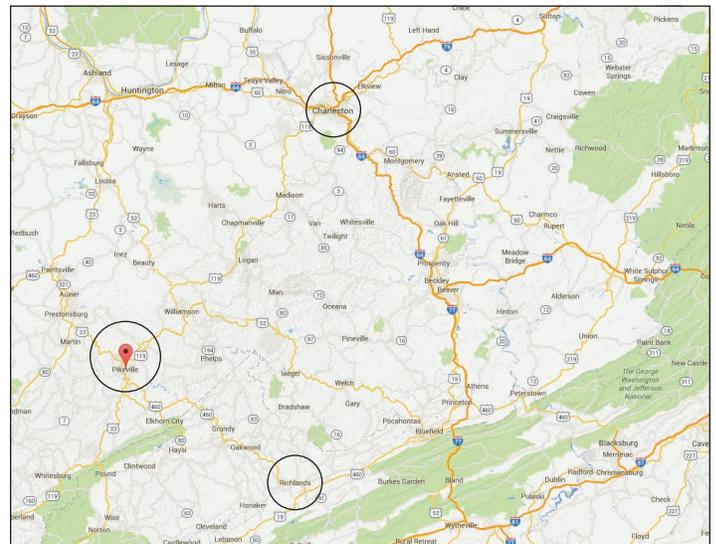
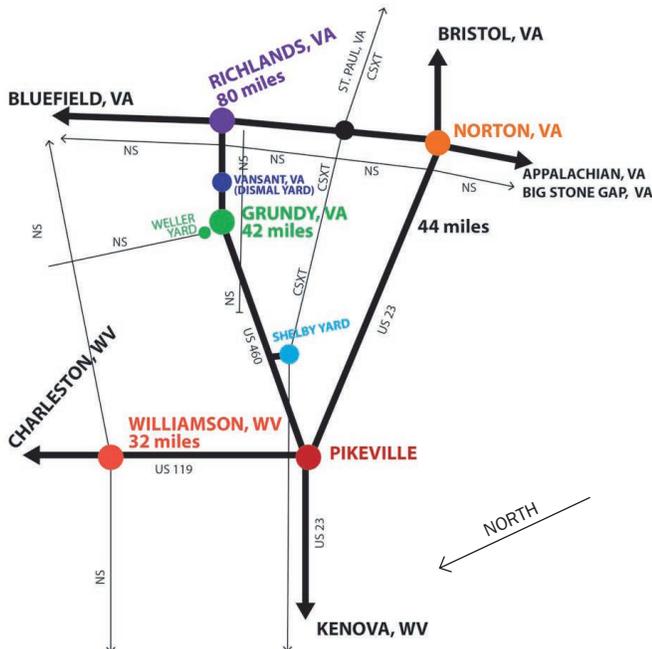
Hotel Telephone: 606-766-2000

Mention the Norfolk and Western Historical Society when registering



2016 CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

- Coke Plant Tour
- Mine Tour
- Clinics
- Virginian Interest Group
- Railfanning
- Model and Photo Contest
- Hatfields and McCoys
- Main Street Live
- NWHS Banquet



2016 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

WEDNESDAY, MAY 18

Set up and early registration

THURSDAY, MAY 19

3:00PM

Registration opens

5:00PM–7:00PM

Meet & Greet, Welcome, Clinics

FRIDAY, MAY 20

9:00AM

Registration opens

10:00AM

Clinics

Hatfield-McCoy Tour

3:00PM–8:00PM

Coke Plant Tour

7:00PM–11:00PM

Virginian Interest Group

Main Street Live in Pikeville

SATURDAY, MAY 21

8:00AM–12:00PM

Mine Tour

1:00PM–5:00PM

Clinics

Business Meeting

6:30PM

NWHS Banquet

COMMISSARY HOURS

Thursday: 3–6 p.m., 7–9 p.m.

Friday: 4:30–6 p.m., 7–9 p.m.

Saturday: 8:30 a.m.–noon, 1–4 p.m.



Weller Yard

Y'all come... "Back to the Coal Fields" for a weekend of fun, education and fellowship. This year's convention will be held in Pikeville, KY. Pikeville has been called the "energy Capital of America" and is centrally located within easy driving distance to several former N&W places of interest. Driving north from Pikeville, you are 30 minutes away from the Pocahontas Division Mainline in Williamson, WV. Driving east from Pikeville, you are 40 minutes from the former N&W (now NS) Buchanan Branch. Driving south from Pikeville, you are 45 minutes from Norton, VA and the Lower Clinch Valley District. There are also many branch lines that will be of interest to all N&W fans. Railfan guides will be available.

Thursday

The registration desk will open at 3:00 p.m. as the convention kicks off. Be sure to join us at 5:00 p.m. for a meet and greet, welcome and clinics.

Friday

The morning will be devoted to clinics and local non-rail tours. You might want to check out the Hatfield-McCoy Tour and gain insight into their legendary feud.

At 3:00 p.m. the bus will depart for Vansant, VA and a tour of the Sun Coal and Coke Jewell Coke Plant. (Tour is limited to 34 people. No dinner provided.) We will travel along the former Chesapeake and Ohio (now CSXT) Big Sandy mainline passing Elkhorn City, KY and the connection with the Clinchfield Railroad. Moving into Buchanan County, VA, we will travel along

Clinics and Presentations:

At press time the following are planned, and there will be more to come. Subject to change.

Jim Nichols: *Kitbashing Tenders*

Alex Schust: *Branch Lines From Narrow Gauge Railroads*

Paul Weber: *Modeling Norfolk & Western signals*

Dean Taylor: *NWHS fre-mo modular group; modeling N&W branch lines*

Everett Young: *Area railroad slideshow*

There will also be previews of the two tours, the annual meeting of the Virginian Interest Group, and the Membership Meeting.





Coal & Coke Plant in Vansant, Virginia Oct 25, 2012

the N&W Levisa Branch to its junction with the Buchanan Branch main line at Weller Yard, VA. Then continuing east and following the N&W line through the town of Grundy, VA past the Dismal Yard, we will arrive at the coke plant. The plant has been in operation since 1960. This facility heats metallurgical coal in large scale, specially designed ovens to more than 2000 degrees Fahrenheit. This leaves behind a carbon rich product called coke. The coke is shipped on the former N&W (now Norfolk Southern) Buchanan Branch to steel mills where it is mixed with iron ore and other elements and heated again in a blast furnace as part of the steel making process.

After the tour you can relax and enjoy Main Street Live in downtown Pikeville. Live music, food, soft drinks and beer.

The Virginian Interest group will meet Friday evening after Coke Plant tour.

Model and Photo Contest

The Model & Photo Contest will have 12 categories, the winners to be decided by popular vote; winners in each category will get a \$25 cash prize. The categories for this year:

- N&W steam
- N&W freight rolling stock including cabooses
- N&W passenger rolling stock
- N&W structures
- N&W original diesels
- N&W second hand diesels
- Virginian steam
- Virginian diesel and electric
- Virginian passenger and freight rolling stock including cabooses
- Virginian structures
- NS locomotives (the current NS)
- Photo contest (prints only; no slides please)

Bring your models for the contest. We will be putting models on display starting Thursday afternoon. Ballots will be counted Saturday afternoon, and prizes will be awarded during the banquet Saturday night.

If you wish to display models, but not compete, we will have Bring & Brag space.

For contests and for the Bring & Brag we encourage you to fill out a sheet describing how you built/scratchbuilt/modified/detailed your model.

AREA RAILFANNING

There are many opportunities for railfanning in the area. Several mine runs originate in Williamson, as well as coal trains and a good number of run through freight and grain trains. Matewan offers an accurate recreation of the N&W Matewan depot



Buchanan Branch

and the location of the Matewan Massacre mine war. On the Buchanan Branch there are six mine runs operated out of Weller Yard. These run Monday through Friday

with extras on Saturday and Sunday. Loaded coal trains leave westbound from Weller Yard and are pushed up a 1.7% grade with three unit pusher sets. There are several mines operating on the Buchanan Branch as well as Sun Coal and Coke's large coke plant. Norton, VA has at least two mine runs operating to serve local coal industries such as the operation at Tom's Creek along with loaded and empty trains moving on the Lower Clinch Valley Line.

Saturday

This morning, weather permitting, we will head out on a mine tour. Our tour bus will leave the hotel at 8:00 a.m. to tour local coal facilities, including a strip mine site and/or coal prep plant. Weather conditions will determine locations.

The afternoon will be devoted to clinics and the annual business meeting.

The annual banquet will begin at 6:30. The banquet will be buffet style and will consist of beef bourguignon (beef tips braised in a red wine gravy), roasted Hawaiian chicken, rice pilaf, mashed potatoes, southern style green beans, dinner rolls, chef's choice of dessert, tea, coffee, water. Cocktails and soft drinks can be purchased at the bar. Entertainment by Coaltown Dixie.



SunCoke-NS Coke loading on February 6, 2014

2016 N&WHS CONVENTION REGISTRATION

	SKU	Price	Number	Sub-Total
Basic Registration (before May 7)				
Member/Family	2412.1A	\$30.00		
Non-Member/Family	2412.1B	\$40.00		
Basic Registration (after May 7)*				
Member/Family	2412.1C	\$40.00		
Non-Member/Family	2412.1D	\$50.00		
Friday				
Hatfield-McCoy Tour	2412.1E	\$3.00		
Coke Plant Tour 3:00pm to 8:00pm**	2412.1F	\$25.00		
Saturday				
Coal Mine Tour 8:00am to noon**	2412.1G	\$25.00		
Shopping Tour	2412.1H	\$3.00		
Banquet	2412.1I	\$29.00		
TOTAL REGISTRATION				

Basic registration covers attendee and family members

***Register at the convention after May 7, 2016**

**** Tours limited to 34; register early to make sure you have a seat.**

NOTE! Basic Registration is required for all activities. The Basic Registration Rate is a family rate; family members attending with the registrant are admitted to presentations and the commissary. Tour and banquet charges are per person.

Make check or money order payable to **Norfolk & Western Historical Society**. Do not send cash! **Do not mail after May 7, 2016**. All tickets are to be picked up at the registration table when you arrive. Receipts are returned via mail for registrations until May 7. After that you may pick up receipts with your convention package. Refunds after May 7 will be subject to a 25% penalty.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Phone: _____

First & last names of persons attending with you: _____

I wish to pay with credit card: VISA MasterCard

Card # _____ Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

**Contact us by phone:
Voice 540-342-0575
Fax 540-342-7439**

**Please include payment
and mail this entire page
to:**

**N&WHS 2016 Convention
PO Box 13908
Roanoke, VA 24038-3908**